

The Main Street Four Point Approach

“Main Street” is a philosophy, a program, and a proven comprehensive approach to commercial revitalization of neighborhood business districts. This approach has been implemented in over 1,200 cities and towns in 40 states across the nation with the help of statewide neighborhood business district revitalization programs and the National Main Street Center at the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The success of the Main Street approach is based on its comprehensive nature. By carefully integrating four points into a practical neighborhood business district management strategy, stakeholders in a local Main Street program will produce fundamental changes in a community's economic base:

Organization involves building a Main Street framework that is well represented by business and property owners, bankers, citizens, public officials, chambers of commerce, and other local economic development organizations. Everyone must work together to enhance a neighborhood business district. A strong organization provides the stability to build and sustain a long-term effort.

Promotion creates excitement in commercial districts. Street festivals, parades, retail events, and image development campaigns are some of the ways Main Street encourages customer traffic. Promotion involves marketing an enticing image to shoppers, investors, and visitors.

Design enhances the attractiveness of the business district, including the perception that it is a clean and safe place. Historic building rehabilitation, street and alley clean-up, colorful banners, landscaping, and lighting all improve the physical image of the neighborhood business district as a quality place to shop, work, walk, invest in, and live. Design improvements of the highest possible standards result in a reinvestment of public and private dollars to neighborhood business districts.

Economic Restructuring involves analyzing current market forces to develop long-term solutions. Sharpening the competitiveness of Main Street's traditional merchants, recruiting new businesses, and creatively converting unused space for new uses, are examples of economic restructuring activities.
